1-McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)948
NB5 Bella-coola NB5

PREFACE

THE term Bella Coola can be applied to the Indians who formerly occupied more than twenty villages on the lower Bella Coola River in central British Columbia, to their near kinsfolk on the Kimsquit River, and to those living at the head of South Bentinck Arm. Disease and changed conditions consequent upon the coming of the white man have so reduced their numbers that the last two groups of settlements have been virtually abandoned, while only one village remains in the Bella Coola valley. This is located on a reserve near the mouth of the river, and its four hundred inhabitants comprise practically all the survivors of what was once a tribe of several thousand people, with a distinctive language and culture of their own. 101 [99] [161]

The material contained in this monograph was collected in this one village many years ago for the National Museum of Canada.[1] I was in the field during two periods that extended from March to August, 1922, and from September, 1923, to February, 1924. My field notes were worked up and the completed manuscript submitted to the Museum in 1926. Since that time it has suffered various vicissitudes. Recommended for publication by the Chief of the Anthropological Division, it passed through the hands of various editors; questions were raised about its size and the suitability of detailed studies of social anthropology in a government publication, and by the time these matters were adjusted, funds for extensive publications were unavailable and the manuscript was put aside. Since the aim of the investigation was to record, as far as possible, the sum-total of the complex and interwoven social life of the Bella Coola, I did not think it desirable to prepare short articles[2] summarizing different aspects, preferring to await an 114 128 [121]

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[1] Then the Victoria Memorial Museum.

[2] The only exception was a short article on Bella Coola supernatural animals published in the Ontario Annual Archaeological Report for 1924-25, pp. 17-27.

121 light on obscure points. That is a task for the comparative student and nothing but confusion would result from such an incorporation in this volume. For the benefit of the reader, [114] footnotes have been inserted referring to *The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians*[3] by Boas, the most comprehensive description of the tribe. In the field I deliberately disregarded published accounts.

102 And what of these people, the subject of this book?

The intimate experiences of the second winter in Bella Coola only confirmed my feeling of sadness at the decay of the old arts and crafts. Music, painting, carving, weaving, story-telling, acting, all are passing away. Only a handful of the tribe survives, and of them the younger people ape the white man and have little interest in the lore and customs of their fathers. I know of few sadder experiences than talking with some Bella Coola patriarch and realizing the tragedy which he feels at the termination of his people's culture.

Though the individual may suffer, civilization must press onward and the life of the Indian will soon disappear. With it will pass forever manners, customs, beliefs, rites, and knowledge, data of value to students of man both now and in the future. Every year lessens the amount of information available. In Bella Coola, for example, the death of Captain Schooner left a gap which none could fill. Others must follow him, and within a short time there will be no ethnological work possible in that tribe. A tithe of the people may survive, but their culture, the growth of generations, will have been swept away.

111 Most of those to whom I am indebted for help in this study have passed away. Dr. A. C. Haddon and Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, both of Cambridge University, who were my mentors in anthropology, are dead; so too is Dr. E. Sapir, former Chief of the Anthropological Division in the National Museum, who gave me instruction in phonetics, and Mr. H. I. Smith, Dominion [127] Archaeologist, to whom are owing most of the photographs re-

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[3] Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, vol. II, 1898.

stream, on which the salmon-weir rested, was carried away.[19] 361

The following village may be included with the above: [173]

(27) *Nusxeq:* on the shore of North Bentinck Arm, to the east of the creek that flows into it at Green Bay. This long-deserted village was built so close to the ocean that high tides reached almost to the houses. According to one informant, the name was derived from that of the first chief sent down [173] from above to that spot; while another connected it, etymologically, with *Nusx*, the name of the barren district some four and a half miles up the valley of the creek. In recent years this village site has been used only as a summer camp.

The name given to the Bella Coola valley is *Nuxálk*; that 101 103 given to the inhabitants of the valley, excluding those of village no. 27, is *Nuxálkmx*.[20]

Two points must be considered with regard to the above 128 list of towns: In the first place, can it be regarded as an 173 accurate list, or do the towns belong to the realm of mythology? 361 In the second place, are the customs and beliefs of the inhabitants of the different towns sufficiently similar to be described without reference to local differences?

The first question is difficult to answer. The Bella Coola undoubtedly consider the existence of these towns to be an historical fact, but so do they regard the peopling of the earth by men created in the land above. Nevertheless, the above list appears to be substantially correct. The Bella Coola, although now collected into a single village, still remember their ancient homes. One man, for example, stated as a matter of course that he was a man of *Snuloli*. Further inquiry elicited the information that he had been born at *Sunxl*, where his [164] father had moved at the time of the smallpox epidemic. It later appeared that my informant's father was born at *Tcumotl*, [166] had married there, and that it was his father who had moved

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[19] This explanation may be only legendary.

[20] Boas, p. 49, states that *Nuxálk* is only applied to the lower villages of the [114] valley. All the writer's information was contrary to this view.

128 from *Snutli*. My informant's grandchildren regard
173 themselves as *Snutli* boys, and their names are embodied in myths
361 of that village, although their forbears have not lived there
166 for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case
exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of
people from one village to another at earlier times, and there
seems no cause to doubt the general accuracy of these. Names
[554] embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as
prerogatives and have been potent factors in keeping their
memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be
in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly
reliable, since few contradictions were received from different
informants.

128 Accounts obtained of the same ceremonies from the
184 descendants of people of different villages were found in most cases to
be identical. There were a few differences in custom between
[796] the people of *Stuix* and those of the other upper valley towns
on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on
[101] the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on
the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be
considered as a tribal entity.

● 114 Boas (p. 48) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees
361 fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included
Pe-ssb (no. 4), *Nalpqatskwan-e* (no. 7), and *Nusdlom* (no.
16).[illegible] All the older people agreed that these are the names of
streams, though settlements located on them may have been
known by the same designations. Names of the five villages
recorded by Boas, nos. 6, 8, 9, 19, and 24, were not known by
several old men questioned on the subject.

101 The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political
619 unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken
throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns
[631] recognized that their origins and customs were similar. This was
[197] also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living
on South Bentinck Arm, and at the head of Dean Channel.

[illegible] Using in each case the spelling of this monograph.

from the moon and stated that there were mountains and snow on it. It is commonly stated that the marks on the moon represent a man carrying a bucket. 821 [134]

The stars figure but slightly either in Bella Coola mythology or thought; it is not even known who made them. Two in the Great Bear constellation are called respectively *[illegible]* and *[illegible]*, "Little Girls." A lone star in the same part of the sky, named *[illegible]*, is said to be following the girls to the forest for illicit intercourse. [776]

Moon, stars, and above all the sun, were, and still are to a certain extent, used by the Bella Coola in computing the passage of time. There are no individuals with the definite prerogative of keeping count of time, but formerly wise old men used to do so.[34] Differences of opinion were the rule rather than the exception, a condition which often led to bitter disputes concerning the proper date for starting the winter ceremonials. Boas (p. 41) has recorded the Bella Coola calendar in greater detail than the present writer has been able to do. The making of calendrical observations is a lost art, and the following list of the months was all that could be learnt. It will be noted that these agree with Boas in regard to the months in the early part of the year, but not in those between the summer and winter solstices; no explanation is offered for this disparity. 805 821 [illegible] 114 [176] [114]

First moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, which has the significance, "The Time for Sockeye Salmon to Ascend the River."

Second moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, "The Time for Eating Dog Salmon."

Third moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, "The Time for Eating Cohoe Salmon."

Fourth moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, "The Time for Gathering Fern Root," or *[illegible]*,

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[34] [illegible] informant stated that there were professional calendrical experts in his boyhood, when he was a young lad although members of the kusiut society (ch. [illegible]) sometimes attended to this matter. [576] [465]

RELIGION

(6)

One of *Alquntam*'s principal functions is that of acting as leader of the Sacred dances of the supernatural beings. As already described, these take place in *Nusmat·a*, the name of which is changed to *[illegible]* for the occasion, while the supernatural ones are awaiting *Alquntam*'s entry at the winter solstice. As soon as he comes, his servants [illegible] most of his guests to rush forth. Among those ministering to Sacred [illegible], the [illegible], his chief adviser in Sacred matters. This being is somewhat indefinitely regarded as a supernatural grizzly bear. He is subordinate to *Alquntam*, and cannot himself initiate proposals, but he can encourage the operation of his superior if he feels bold. Shaman singers are under his special guidance. He is so powerful that if he turns his head in anger at any mortal, the latter falls dead. As far as could be learnt, *[illegible]* is concerned only with Sacred matters and never visits this earth. 776 [598]

One of the most intangible of the Bella Coola supernatural beings is a woman, *[illegible]*, *[illegible]*, "The Sorrow-Maker" or *[illegible]*, "The Slave-Owner." Boas (p. [illegible]) recorded fairly definite information about her, but the writer could gather only inconsequential fragments. Mortals are so distant to her, but she takes little interest either in their welfare or actions. In the beginning of time, *Alquntam* sent her down to earth to watch the behaviour of mortals and report to him. She needed a central location for this purpose and accordingly chose [illegible] Bay, where she could watch the canoes as they passed up and down the coast. At first the inhabitants of the earth showed her great respect, but gradually she was ignored and canoes passed her home without stopping. Moreover, she began to fear that she might be injured by the proximity of mankind, and especially that human footsteps might contaminate and mar her supernatural frame. So she fled far to the north, whither no one knows. In fact, no one is even absolutely certain that she went to the north. According to a well-known Bella Coola tradition, a man once tried to climb Mount *[illegible]* and found a pleasant grassy place near [78]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

than [illegible] years earlier. It appears that attempts were commonly made to kill chiefs by means of sympathetic magic, and it is quite possible that such attempts, becoming known, preyed upon the minds of the victims to such an extent that death resulted.

WEALTH

Since wealth is so important in chieftainship, it would be desirable at this point to consider the concepts of wealth. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a satisfactory treatment of this subject. The coming of the white man altered the economic aspects of Bella Coola life so radically, and at such an early period, that concrete examples of economic interdependence, so useful to a thorough study, could not be obtained in the field. It is possible that greater attention to this subject might have produced more satisfactory results, but I am doubtful of this.

In the old days, "wealth" was of two categories: (a) Prerogatives, tangible or intangible, which could be shown, pictorially or dramatically, or could be expressed in words; and (b) Goods which could be distributed for validating such prerogatives. Individual possessions, unsuited for distribution, were hardly considered as wealth; a sewing-machine, a bottle of whiskey, a bed, or some other luxury might give satisfaction to the owner, but did not increase his importance in the eyes of his fellows. The value of objects was only for their use in ceremonial distribution; indeed, prior to such distribution, they were only of potential value. This attitude controlled Bella Coola economics in the early days of contact, and still influences their behaviour. A native store-keeper once ruefully commented on the fact that he would gain no advantage from the goods on his shelves, since he hoped merely to sell them, not to give them away.

A man's relatives were expected to help him in the acquisition of goods, but the extent of their contributions was never

[illegible]

[illegible]

CHAPTER IV

ORIGIN MYTHS

Introductory—Bella Coola Origin Myths—Origin Myths of Other Tribes—Early Traditions Bearing the Ceremonial Sign; Sources of Origin Myths—Recent Origin Myths

INTRODUCTORY

EXAMPLES will be given here of the origin myths, which are believed to authorize so much of the ritual already described, and to which repeated reference has been made. In 1898 Professor Boas published such an admirable collection of traditions of this type (op. cit.) that the present writer paid little attention to the subject. The Bella Coola, however, are so intensely proud of the deeds of their first forefathers that several insisted on recounting them before they were willing to do other work; in consequence, a fair number of myths was collected through necessity. Since tales of this type were recounted almost entirely at potlatches, their significance has declined since the prohibition of this rite. Consequently, many legends are only remembered in part; the abbreviated and often pointless series of anecdotes here recorded can be no more than a small part of the rich field which must once have existed among the Bella Coola.[1]

As Professor Boas has clearly shown, origin myths relate how, in the beginning of time, the supreme god sent down to earth the first ancestors of the Bella Coola people, each usually provided with names of [illegible], a house, and certain ceremonial [illegible]. The rights to the names of these people, as well as to the type of ceremonial objects used by them, has been the privilege of their descendants. But these early Bella Coola, like their modern descendants, had several designations, each carrying with it a definite prerogative. In a single myth there may be embodied a dozen or more names and incidents which are quoted at the present day to authorize such different phases of culture as dances, rights to hunting-grounds, [illegible], names of dogs, or [illegible] prerogatives.[1] Any myth which gives the initial use of a name, a dance, or any other prerogative, is termed a smayusta. Each of these is, at least in the old days, remembered with great care and never recounted in full detail except to the members of the ancestral family whose names are embodied in it. Even at potlatches the full details of the myth are not told there. Indeed, if a young man is of a flighty, garrulous disposition, unlikely to preserve the dignity of his ancestral name, the details are concealed from him. Even at the present time there is much resentment at any unauthorized use of a smayusta, and in the old days this would inevitably have led to bloodshed.

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[1] [illegible]

Boas (p. 110) states that the terms smayusta and [illegible] are synonymous. The writer feels certain that this is an error. It was discussed repeatedly with various Bella Coola, all of whom agreed that a [illegible] is a mere story which can be told by anyone, whereas a smayusta is a myth possessed by the individual, or individuals, whose prerogatives are derived from it. To the Bella Coola the two are utterly different.

None the less, there is little doubt that records of the past change from one category to the other. A wealthy chief eager to give a potlatch, but lacking the mythical authorization, must frequently have used a [illegible], claiming the hero as his ancestor. There would be violent resentment at him for doing so, but the prestige of one who can give potlatches is so great that in time his claim would probably be accepted. The one

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[1] The details of these will be described later.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Long ago at the time the world was first populated there were no rivers apparently, for such were confined underground in a cavern-like prison called [illegible], the approach to which was barred by a huge boulder. Not only were the rivers shut up, but with them were their occupants, including the salmon. [illegible] tried to break the barrier, but without avail; then Raven succeeded. Since then the Bella Coola River has flowed in its present course. But the Fraser River was still in bondage, to the disgust of the chiefess who wished to travel up it to the home of the chief [illegible]. The [illegible] took pity on them and by breaking the barrier permitted them to reach their destination.

Origin Myths of Other Tribes

As has been repeatedly stated, the Bella Coola have obtained many prerogatives by marriages with the members of neighbouring tribes. Among these are, according to their belief, myths dealing with the peopling of distant localities. Ceremonially and sociologically, such traditions have the same importance as myths that describe Bella Coola as the first place of settlement of the first inhabitants. Accordingly, they can be given at this point.

In the previous section the original landing-places of some of the individuals described is said to have been outside the Bella Coola valley. Boas, discussing this fact (p. [illegible]), suggests that such myths may reflect the movements of the ancestors of the Bella Coola from the greater Salish stock. Though this is a plausible hypothesis, it is also possible that

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] their teeth. When the mother of the twin described in the last paragraph was crawling [illegible] in a temporary shelter in the woods, he said [illegible], cutting her hand. The old woman who mentioned this occurrence stated that both her grandmother, the [illegible] Salmon, and her sister, a Spring Salmon, though still infants, were aware of the accident and [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible].

On account of their uncanny power, twins are considered weaklings and usually die young in spite of the care lavished upon them and the taboos observed by their parents.[1] If these twins, instead of being buried, is put in a box which is placed in a tree far away from the village. Every year the tree changes its course, moving into the [illegible] in order to reach the tree [illegible] the body, and this continues until it reaches the [illegible] and [illegible] away box and coffin.

[illegible]

When working in the field, an anthropologist almost inevitably concentrates upon ceremonials and other epochs in an individual's life, so the description of the daily routine which a Bella Coola, or [illegible], is fundamentally important although it defies description on account of its intangibility. A child grows up in a large house, occupied by several families, in which there is little privacy. The parents provide food and clothing, but more distant relatives take a greater share of responsibility for this than do white people. When food is being given out, a child soon learns that he will be given some of it, and that he will have his portion in any distribution of property. Furniture, bedding, and other necessities are reduced to a minimum, but a boy or girl is welcome to sleep with relatives should his own parents wish to go hunting or fishing. The sense of power possessed by a Bella Coola with many relatives is largely intangible, but it has practical applications and a man and damage his esteem in future that he has shown (being) respect to the dead; there is also a gain in social prestige. As the whole community respects, admires, and sometimes envies a man for having carried out a memorial potlatch, there is no doubt that he is pleased and gratified to such an extent that his grief is dulled. These two factors must constantly be kept in mind; memorial potlatches serve to commemorate the dead, but in so doing they add to the social importance of the donors. The one combines to bring considerable comfort to the chief who has lost a dear relative. In some cases the social prestige is the real motive, the grief assumed and unimportant, but in others the latter is the only factor that matters, and a chief is entirely oblivious to any increase in his own status. In most memorial potlatches, both feelings are present in the mind of the donor, and both are gratified.

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[1] [illegible]

DETAILED ACCOUNT OF A FUNERAL.

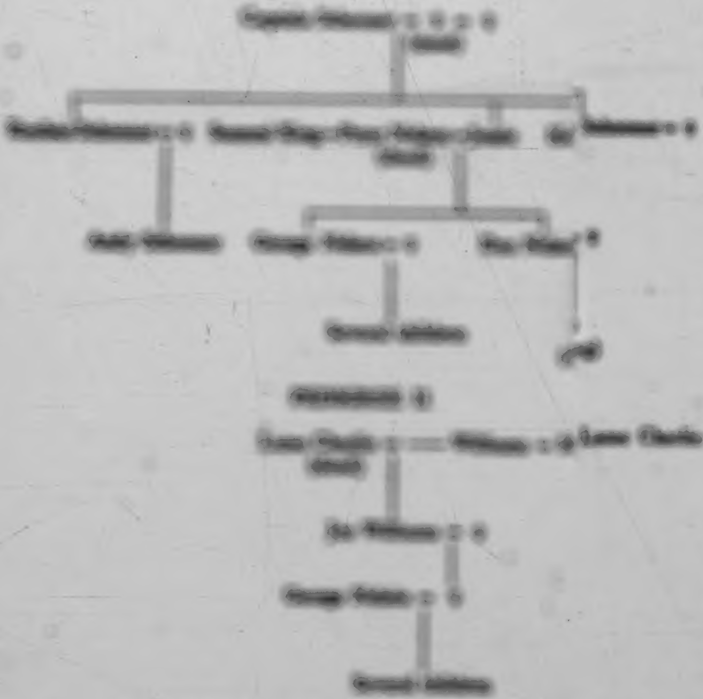
In the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to describe the traditional death rites of the Bella Coola. The following section comprises a detailed account of funeral ceremonies witnessed in 1922. The contrast between these and the ones already recorded will indicate some of the changes in custom which are of such importance in studies of cultural growth or decline. The following description will also serve to demonstrate a point repeatedly mentioned, the manner in which business transactions and arrangements of all kinds take place whenever the people have been called together.

On June 15, 1922, the death occurred in Bella Coola of Annie (Mrs. Samuel King), daughter of Captain Schooner. The latter, now deceased, was one of the writer's most trusted friends, and as a result of this friendship it was possible not only to attend the actual rites, but to ascertain much of the feeling underlying them. This advantage had its drawbacks, since it was manifestly impossible to question either the father or the husband of the woman too closely. The details will be de-

[illegible] 764 [114]

[illegible] 601 764

[illegible]



[illegible] 764 159

[illegible]

uninitiated are expelled, with the exception of the council to 575*
whom, as guests, a meal is served. Then they too leave and 796
the *kukusiut* eat together. Finally, the singers strike up one of the dancer's songs, and he dances to it to end the evening's rites.

The fourth day is *sulmecum*, "That Which Is Opened." [796]
During the day the carpenters work to complete the masks, [532]
and towards dusk the house is again put in order. The *kukusiut* are summoned again to practise the songs, if necessary, [534]
and always to arrange who shall wear the masks, a matter left to the members and the carpenters. Then the uninitiated are called in to see the masked figures and watch any dramatic [532]
representation. After their exclusion, the masks are burnt. Then the *kukusiut* gather outside the dancer's house where his song is sung once more to send his call back above. Frequently another *kusiut* now receives a call, so that the *sulmecum* of one dancer is likewise the *[illegible]* for another. The *kukusiut* assemble in the latter's house, but the uninitiated are not allowed to return to that from which they have been ejected until the platform-enclosure has been destroyed at the end of the season.

A word might be said about *kusiut* paraphernalia, although 575*
much of this will have to be described in detail for special 796
dances. Boas gives illustrations of a large number of *kusiut* 532
masks and gives such an admirable description of them that
little could be added. They are carved from the solid wood, [114]
the larger of birch, the smaller of alder, and each carpenter [124]
endeavours to make a striking effigy of the being portrayed. *Anulikwutsaix* is present at every dance and has become so well standardized that she can always be recognized. This is
true, also, for Thunder, Echo, the Sunbear, the Laughter, the [776]
Hermaphrodite, and a few other supernatural beings, but so much variation occurs in others that even a *kusiut* of much experience cannot always tell what being is represented. The masks are painted, and sometimes the designs indicate the being, even though the carving fails to do so; verisimilitude is

775 776 781 figures are really beings from another world. The explanation lies in the profound belief of all Bella Coola in the near presence of the supernatural; consequently, a supernatural explanation is the one normally given for all unusual incidents. The dances themselves are filled with strange manifestations, particularly the weird whistling concerning the origin of which the uninitiated have no idea. Once convinced by this means of the presence of unknown powers, it is easy for them to believe that the masked figures are visitors from the other world. Nor was their belief in former days shaken by certain representations which were palpably false, such as that of the sun. No one could believe that the disk which moved across the back of the house was the sun itself, but on the other hand it seemed marvellous to the uninitiated, ignorant of the means used to perform it. To the white man there seems a fundamental difference between a supernatural being and the representation of a strange object made to move by unseen means, but to the Bella Coola both belong to another realm, and are accordingly akin. Moreover, there were occasions when the uninitiated must have seen the slipping or actual falling of a mask, for example, during the fight with wasps. But here again the deep belief of the non-members came to the help of the deceiver, who told their guests that this was caused by the coming of a call to the actor, and what might easily have become doubt and suspicion was thus changed to respect.

[128] [123] [114] The writer laboured under two tremendous difficulties in collecting information about *kusiut* matters; the present dances are mere shadows of what they formerly were, and there are no more uninitiated. His presence and quest for information served to stimulate interest and led to a partial revival of the old rites, but the bulk of his material was obtained from informants rather than from actual observation. It is a universal characteristic of mankind to idealize accounts of former practices, so it is not only possible, but probable, that the foregoing descriptions are more perfect than many of the rites to which

they enter. Even when full allowance is made for this, the fact 575*
still remains that the kukusiut were able to carry out dances 796*
in which they deceived the uninitiated. Above all, it is clear 781
that those who were not members of the society had the great- 114
est respect for the powers of those who were, and although doubt may have existed concerning the identity of the supernatural visitors, there was not the slightest concerning the ability of the kukusiut to have, for example, their stomachs ripped open. The writer discussed this point with too many old men and women to have the slightest uncertainty on this point, and he feels confident that anyone who could have listened to the account of a reliable old man concerning his fears when he had "killed" a kusiut in this manner, would have shared his conviction.

It would be fascinating to discuss at some length the prob- 575*
able history of the kusiut society, but this would entail a com- 796*
parison with the rites of other coastal tribes and belongs to the 178
realm of comparative ethnology. This monograph deals only 184
with Bella Coola practices as the writer saw them or heard 592
them described, so that the history of the society can only be treated from this angle. It appears certain that the rites have increased in secrecy. One old member with whom the matter was discussed remembered having heard that long ago masks were constructed in the presence of the uninitiated. Considered as an isolated statement this would have little value, but in conjunction with information derived from Kimsquit it becomes of importance. It is true that in Kimsquit the masks are made in secret, but they are shown to the uninitiated as masks, and the writer was told of one instance in which *[illegible]*, during his round of the village, fell into the water and remained there all day, to the amusement of non-members who recognized that he was merely a disguised human being. It is even said that long ago the manufacture of masks was entrusted to influential uninitiated. It is clear that there has been a tremendous increase in secrecy even at Kimsquit, and a great deal more at Bella Coola. The writer believes that

J. McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

APPENDIX D

BELLA COOLA-ENGLISH VOCABULARY

During the period in the field, the writer's attention was devoted entirely to sociological and religious investigation, and no attempt was made either to analyse the intricacies of the Bella Coola language or to record texts. This part of the monograph consists only of words which were collected fortuitously, and no effort was made to compile an exhaustive list, or even a representative one. This explains the preponderance of proper names, and the large number of terms connected with rituals of all kinds, some of which are rapidly disappearing from common usage. Many of these were used by the writer continually in gathering technical data, and their interpretation is unquestionably correct. A few words, however, were not rechecked on different occasions, or from different informants, so that some errors may have crept in, either in translation or in recording. No terms have been employed of which the writer has any real doubt, but the same accuracy is not claimed for this vocabulary as for the monograph as a whole. Lack of knowledge of Bella Coola grammar made it impracticable to utilize the words recorded in the songs, since many of these include affixes and other structural elements that affect the root. 128 192* [114] ● [145]

In listing the words alphabetically, the following arbitrary system of letter order has been followed and all symbols have been disregarded, for example, a and ā are not separated.

[illegible] follows a.
[illegible] follows a.
[illegible] follows a.
[illegible] follows i.
[illegible] follows i.
[illegible] follows a.

A

[illegible]: 1—A newly organized society of which the members can perform four types of dances. 192* [575]
2—Member of the society.
[illegible]: Man mentioned in an ancient story.
[illegible]: Chief of sea-lions in the beginning of time.
[illegible]

105

are apparently more recent comers to the coast than their neighbors and have not fully adopted this coast culture.

The following examples of sympathetic magic and witchcraft, 114 collected during 1920 to 1923 among the Bellacoola, illustrate 121 the extent of their belief in this direction.

Most of this information was given me by the late Captain 115 Schooner, born about 1848, and Joshua Moody, born about 1868, both apparently full-blood Bellacoola Indians. Neither of them [191] spoke English and both gave me the data in Chinook jargon, which I have endeavored to interpret and arrange in logical order, but have tried to render in as nearly as possible the Indian mode of thought, feeling and expression. Schooner was a pagan gentleman. Joshua has great knowledge of plants and animals, and is a Bellacoola scientist, but his great ambition and jealousy, combined with his disloyalty in giving up his own people's customs and adopting a very thin veneer of Christianity, color his statements relating to beliefs, although his plant and animal data have always withstood cross examination and comparison with the data supplied by other Indians. Alec Davis and Mrs. Willie [191] Mack told of the toad. They do not talk English and spoke to me in Chinook jargon. Only the accounts about the grizzly bear skin and the bracelet of beaver skin, which were given me by Mrs. Stenniger, were told in English.

The material was not given as accounts of magic or witch- 114 craft, but rather as part of the data regarding the properties of 121 plants and animals of which I was endeavoring to collect as complete information as possible.

Joshua, who is even younger than Captain Schooner, remem- 114 bers the time when Mr. John Clayton was the only white man 115 living in the Bella Coola valley, and when they saw only one other white man every year or two. Consequently these men remember the old Bellacoola beliefs before they were much, if at all, affected by European ideas.

It will be noticed that magic among the Bellacoola is con- 789 sidered of use both for beneficial and injurious purposes, and 754 that the materials giving effect to it are of both plant and animal origin.

4: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925

NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7

ENTOMOLOGY AMONG THE BELLACOOLA AND CARRIER INDIANS

By HARLAN I. SMITH

B 131 THE Bellacoola Indians live in the Norway of Canada, about midway of the Pacific Coast, where Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to cross Canada, reached the sea; that is, about half way between Vancouver and Prince Rupert. Their country is around the head of the inlets about sixty miles in from or east of Ocean Falls and the usual route of the steamers up and down the coast. This inland passage is with few exceptions B 105 protected by the outer fringe of islands. The Bellacoola language is one of the Salish linguistic stock. The people are of the typical North Pacific Coast culture, characterized by the extensive use of red cedar and sea products, especially salmon, huge houses of split cedar planks with carved house posts, and totem poles, and immense seagoing canoes dug out of cedar. They were expert carpenters and had a peculiar art, especially in painting and carving, largely of conventionalized animal forms—a valuable contribution to the art of the world. This art may become of great financial value to the manufacturers of this country as well as a magnet capable of exploitation to bring in tourists with money from foreign lands. These Indians had a very highly developed social organization, many dramas and rituals, and a complex financial system popularly known as the potlatch.

C 101 [131] The Carrier Indians of Ulkatcho, on the other hand, live in the high plateau of the semi-arid region, perhaps 75 miles northeast of the Bellacoola. They differ from the Bellacoola in language, appearance, and culture perhaps as much as do the Turks from the English. They had a less realistic art, which was largely geometric and pictographic, highly conventionalized and symbolic. Their social organization and financial system also were less highly developed.

B C 114 104 From time to time during 1920-1923 inclusive, I have secured from both these peoples data about their use of materials. Part

4: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1923

NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7

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of these data refer to insects, and may be of interest to entomologists, although my spelling of Indian words is very problematical, because some of the sounds I can neither hear nor make, and I am unable to record adequately many of those that I can hear. The data here given are preliminary to a complete working over of my notes, but are believed to be nearly complete.

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Insects apparently were not so well observed by the Bellacoola as were useful mammals and plants, the stinger of the bumble-bee, for instance, being supposed to be in its mouth. Few insects had names, that is, mainly those which were used or which troubled the Indians. Insects were not used for food, and honey was unknown until after the coming of the white man. The head of the gad-fly was used as a pattern in painting designs, the nest of the yellow-jacket in sympathetic magic or witchcraft, and "fly spit" was said to be good for sores. They had a story about the bumble-bee.

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Among the Ulkatcho also observation of insects was weaker than that of mammals and plants, and they apparently had names for only a few insects, those which troubled them. Ant lyon pits and its method of taking prey were known. Insects were of no use to the Ulkatcho whatever. An instance was observed of an Indian amusing himself with a buzzing fly held in his mouth. They employed smudges, fish oil, gum of the cottonwood, and blossoms of cow parsnip with oil to protect themselves from mosquitoes, black flies and no-see-ums, and smoke to protect foods from flies.

The Ant lyon, among the Ulkatcho, is called Kinselkats. It is said to be numerous at Ulkatcho, but that it was useless and that there was no story about it. My informant voluntarily showed me the pits made by the larvae of this insect and, catching ants for the purpose, demonstrated its well-known method of taking its prey.

The grasshopper (*Orthoptera*), that makes a noise by rubbing its wings together when it flies, was called Telcus, among the Ulkatcho.

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"Fly spit," that is the material surrounding a nymph of a spittle insect, also known as a frog hopper (*Cercopidae*), is said

I.

105 The Bella Coola are a small tribe inhabiting the coasts of Dean Inlet and Bentinck Arm, two long and narrow fiords situated in about latitude 52° north, in British Columbia. Their habitat extends along Bella Coola River, which empties into North Bentinck Arm. The name "Bella Coola" is a corruption of the word "Bílxula," by which name the tribe is known to the Kwakiutl. There is no term in their own language embracing all the tribes speaking the Bella Coola language. It seems that at a former time the tribe was quite populous; but, owing to various epidemics and the introduction of other diseases, its numbers have dwindled down, so that at the present time it has been reduced to only a few hundred souls. The 105 197 language spoken by the tribe belongs to the Salishan family, more particularly to the group of dialects spoken along the coasts of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. The great similarity between the Bella Coola and the other Coast-Salishan dialects leads me to assume that at one time the tribes speaking these dialects inhabited contiguous areas. At the present time the Bella Coola are separated from other tribes speaking Salishan languages by a considerable stretch of country, which is inhabited by tribes of Athapascan and Kwakiutl lineage. Vocabulary and grammar have been highly modified, particularly by an extensive elision of vowels. The relation of their language to the other dialects of the Coast Salish is similar to that of the Tillamook, another language belonging to the Salishan family, which is spoken on the coast of Oregon, in an area separated from the rest of the Salishan territory by the district inhabited by the Chinook.

105 144 Physically the Bella Coola bear evidence of long-continued contact with the northern Coast tribes, and also with the Athapascan tribes of the interior. Evidently intermarriages have been quite frequent, so much so that their present physical appearance differs considerably from that of the southern Salishan tribes, of whom they form a branch. The same is true in regard to their customs and beliefs, which differ fundamentally from those of the southern Salishan tribes.

1 121 In the present paper I shall describe the mythology of the Bella Coola, and discuss its development.

II.

114 Our previous knowledge of the mythology of this tribe is based on studies made by Adrian Jacobsen, Fillip Jacobsen, [illegible], and the writer. In 1886 I published a few brief notes on their traditions.[1] [illegible] pub-

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1·8 [1] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1886, p. [illegible].

lished some remarks on the religious life of the Bella Coola in 1886,¹ which, however, contain so many misconceptions that they cannot be used to advantage. At the same time I published a brief description of the tribe, based on information received from a small group of members of the tribe who were travelling in Germany. In this description also there are a number of misconceptions. The Indians were shown a collection of masks from Vancouver Island with which they were not familiar. They gave, however, explanations of these masks, judging by the similarity to masks of their own tribe; consequently the explanations given there are not correct.² In 1890 I had to do with a number of Bella Coola who were fishing for salmon in Fraser River. The information obtained from them was published in the reports of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1891.³ A. Jacobsen published a description of their ceremonies in 1892.⁴ Filip Jacobsen described some of their traditions and customs in 1893 and 1894.⁵ I published a collection of traditions in 1894 and 1895.⁶

III.

All the collections which have been made heretofore do not bring out clearly the principal characteristics of the mythology of the Bella Coola. The tribes of the North Pacific coast consider the Sun as the most important deity, but at the same time they believe in a great many beings of supernatural power. For this reason their whole mythology is very unsystematic. The Bella Coola, on the other hand, have developed a peculiar mythology, in which a number of supernatural beings have been co-ordinated. A system has been evolved which justifies our terming the supernatural beings "deities." The general features of this system are as follows:—

The Bella Coola believe that there are five worlds, one above the other. The middle one is our own world, the earth. Above it are spanned two heavens, while below it there are two underworlds. In the upper heaven resides the supreme deity, a woman who interferes comparatively little with the fates of mankind. In the centre of the lower heaven, that is in the zenith, stands the house of the gods, in which reside the Sun and all the other deities. Our own earth is an island swimming in the ocean. The underworld is inhabited by the ghosts, who are at liberty to return to heaven, whence they may be sent down again to our earth. The ghosts

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[1] Original-Mittheilungen aus den Königlichen Museen für Völkerkunde, Berlin, 1886, pp. [illegible]

[2] Ibid., pp. [illegible]

[3] Seventh Report of the Committee on the North-western Tribes of Canada, pp. [illegible]. Report of the [illegible] Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Cardiff, 1891, pp. [illegible]

[4] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1892, pp. [illegible]

[5] Ymer, Tidskrift utgifven af Svenska Sällskapet för Antropologi och Geografi, [illegible]

[6] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, [illegible]

in middle of the water, the barnacles and worms bit her. She jumped up into the canoe again. The birds came ashore. After a short time the barnacles and sea-worms came ashore too. They looked very short, because they had eaten the bear. Then the youth said to the girl, "There are two trails here,—one leading to the left, the other to the right. You follow the one, I will follow the other. If the trails meet, we will marry; if they do not, we have separate forever." They started, and after a while met each other. Then the youth married the girl. (Mask of the Bear, Plate X, Fig. 11.)[1]

VI.

It is necessary to make a few remarks on the relation of the ceremonials of the Bella Coola Indians to their mythology. I have not seen any of their ceremonials, and my descriptions are based on inquiries, and upon the accounts published by *Filip* and *Adrian Jacobsen.*

The Bella Coola have two ceremonials,—the sisau'k and the kū'siut, which correspond to the tsā'eqa and the ts'ē'ts'aēqa of the Kwakiutl. I have described these ceremonials fully in another paper.[2] The sisau'k ceremonials are mostly dramatic representations illustrating the clan legends, some of which have been recorded in Chap. IV, while the kū'siut ceremonials are dramatic representations of the initiation of members of various clans into certain secret societies. Among these, the Cannibal Society, the Society of the Laughers, and the Society of the Throwers, are the most important. These are called by the Bella Coola the ē'lx'ōtlāla, Olx, and Dō'ts'a. I described on pp. 32, 33, the spirits presiding over the two first-named societies. The information which I obtained on these points is perfectly clear and consistent. I cannot quite reconcile the explanations given by A. and F. Jacobsen to the accounts which I received. It seems that their accounts do not clearly distinguish between the opinions held by various tribes. In the article above referred to, I described fully the opinions held by the Kwakiutl in regard to the origin of their Cannibal Society. They believe that a spirit called Baxbakualanuxsī'wae initiates the Cannibals. He is represented as having an enormous black head with dilated nostrils and large mouth. I have made frequent inquiries among the Bella Coola, but received the uniform answer that this being does not initiate their Cannibals. It is not impossible that a few families may have adopted this tradition from the Kwakiutl tribes, but I have not been able to find it among the Bella Coola. Jacobsen maintains that Baxbakualanuxsī'wae is the particular spirit of the Cannibal among the Bella Coola, and brings forward the well-known tradition of the [illegible] as an explanation of the ceremonial. The only modification which I note in this tradition is that the [illegible] are described as [illegible] out through their [illegible] the [illegible] of children, [illegible] which I found related of the [illegible] of [illegible].[1] He calls him "[illegible]," and in the Bella Coola dialect, [illegible].[2] This word is decidedly of Kwakiutl origin, meaning "the one who eats human flesh at the mouth of the river (or at the north end of the world)." Neither have I been able to find any mask representing this being among the Bella Coola tribe. The masks which they use in connection with the [illegible] ceremony are of quite a different character (Plate XII, Figs. [illegible]). I am the more inclined to think that Mr. Jacobsen did not clearly distinguish between the customs and traditions of various tribes, since he introduces "[illegible]" ([illegible]) in the traditions of the Bella Coola, while it is distinctively a legend of the Kwakiutl tribes of the extreme northwest of Vancouver Island. Jacobsen does not distinguish clearly between the sisaok and the kusiut, stating that the kusiut dances are performed during the sisaok in the same way as, among the Kwakiutl, a [illegible] may be celebrated during the [illegible]. This may be, but theoretically the two ceremonials must be considered entirely distinct. According to the information which I received, sisaok dances may be held in summer, in which case the kusiut could not possibly form part of the sisaok ceremonial. When, on the other hand, the sisaok takes place during the kusiut period, it would naturally be accompanied by kusiut dances.

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[1] Additional legends of the Bella Coola have been published in the publications quoted on pp. 26, 27.

[2] Annual Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, pp. 311–738.

As stated before, the sisaok is a ceremonial in which the legend of the clan is illustrated by means of dramatic performances. At the same time valuable presents are distributed among the guests who are invited to witness the ceremonial. The value of the gifts amounts often to several thousand dollars. At this time the family legend is told in general outlines, but the details of the legend are kept a secret, and are transmitted only to those who are initiated in the sisaok of the clan. It seems that we must consider the transmission of the sisaok legend in the following manner: At any given time it is the property of the chief of the family, who, at the time of the celebration, transfers his rights to his successor, generally to his son. The full tradition is kept secret by the owner. It seems that there is a close analogy between the conditions prevailing in the northwest and those found among the southwestern Indians, among whom certain priests are guardians of traditions. Among the tribes of the northwest coast the chief of a family is the guardian and owner of the family tradition, while among the southwestern tribes the priest is the guardian of the tradition belonging to a clan or to a fraternity. My impression is, however, that among the northwestern

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[1] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, [illegible], p. [illegible].

[2] Ibid., [illegible], p. [illegible].

allowed to resume his former; but before doing so for the first time, he must stop at the door and shout, "Wip, wip, wip!" Then he jumps over the threshold. Accompanied by many men, he is led after four days' dance to the river for final purification. He is pushed into the water, but struggles to free himself. He tries to bite his companions, and enters the water. Finally he is led back. Then he [illegible] because the spirit has left him entirely. The people beat time while he is going back to the house. Then he is offered a piece of salmon, which is placed on his throat, while the people shout, "Hap, hap!" The salmon is taken away again, and after some time he is allowed to take one bite. Then he must lie down. After the dancing season is ended, he is again allowed to eat in the same way as other people do. The piece of salmon that was placed on his throat is eaten by children as a protection against sickness. Finally a ceremony is performed which is called "taking the lip of the [illegible] out of the Cannibal's body." While this is being done, the people cry, "Hap!" Then they throw the lip upon another Cannibal, who at once falls into an ecstasy. Then the shaman takes it back and throws it up towards the sky, where it disappears. The dish and the spoon that the Cannibal used during his ecstasy are destroyed. For four years he must wear a small ring of red cedar-bark, in summer as well as in winter.

The Olx is also initiated in heaven by the being described before (p. [illegible]). There are different traditions regarding his initiation among different clans. Some Olx, during their performances, walk on ropes which are stretched through the house. When he returns from his initiation, small whistles, called [illegible], which imitate the voices of eagles, are heard outside of the house. Then the Olx comes in a state of ecstasy, scratching the people who assemble to hold him, and tearing their blankets. Finally the people succeed in placing a blanket over his head, and he begins to come to his senses. When he enters the house, the people beat time, then he teaches the chorus leader a song. The mask worn by the Olx is quite large, and characterized by a large nose (Plate XII, Fig. 4). He carries a dancing-club (Plate XII, Fig. 10), and rings made of red cedar-bark. He is accompanied by two assistants, who also wear masks.

VIII.

[2] We will now discuss the probable origin of the mythology described in the preceding pages. In order to do so, it is necessary to make a brief statement in regard to the social organization of the neighboring tribes. In another paper[1] I have fully discussed the considerable amount of borrowing
[7] that has taken place among the Coast tribes, and the relation of their

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[1] Indianische Sagen von der nord-pacifischen Küste Amerikas, Berlin, 1895, pp. [illegible] et seq.

[illegible] to those of the Interior. It is unnecessary to dwell on this subject here. The similarity of the Bella Coola legends to those of the other Coast tribes on the one hand and to the traditions of the Athapascan tribes on the other, is evident.

It is, however, important to compare their social organization with that of the neighboring tribes, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the origin of their peculiar organization. As stated before, the Bella Coola are divided into village communities, which are considered as so many gentes. Each village community has its tradition, which is represented in certain ceremonies. The supernatural beings which play a part in these traditions are personified by certain dancers. Other Coast tribes have a much more complex organization. The Tlingit and Haida are divided into two clans, each of which is subdivided into a great many families, which, as it would seem, were originally village communities. This opinion is based on the fact that the names of many of the families must be translated as "inhabitants of such and such a place." The two clans are present in all the villages of the tribe, each family belonging to either one clan or the other. The Tsimshian have the same system, except that the number of clans is four instead of two. Each tribe is divided into families, which embrace the inhabitants of a certain region; but all the families of the whole tribe are classified according to the four clans. Among the Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian, descent is purely maternal; among the northern Kwakiutl tribes, conditions are somewhat different, according to observations made by Dr. Livingston Farrand. Here we have village communities which are subdivided according to four clans in the same way as those of the Tsimshian, but descent is not purely maternal. There is a strong preponderance of the latter form of descent, but parents are at liberty to place their children in either the paternal or maternal clan. The preponderance of maternal descent is, however, so strong, that from my previous occasional inquiries I drew the inference that descent was purely maternal.

Among the southern Kwakiutl tribes the families, constituting a village community, are subdivided into a number of clans, but each clan is confined to one village. We do not find a limited number of clans pervading the whole tribe, as we do among the northern tribes. An analysis of the social organization of this tribe has shown that the present organization has evidently developed from a previous simpler state, in which the tribe was divided into single village communities. The present more complex organization resulted from the amalgamation of various villages. Owing to the influence of the totemism of the northern tribes, each village community adopted a crest, which in course of time became the totem of the clan.[1] The Kwakiutl have a peculiar organization, which may be considered a transitional stage between

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[1] "[illegible] of the Kwakiutl Indians," Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, p. 333.